DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 317 494 SP 031 889

AUTHOR Sefer, Jasmina; Angelovski, Nada
TITLE Drama Improvisation as a Method of Covering Fairy Tales in School Curriculum.
PUB DATE 84
NOTE 34p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Childrens Literature; *Creativity; *Curriculum Development; *Dramatic Play; Elementary Education; Fantasy; *Student Motivation; Theater Arts

ABSTRACT

In order to influence motivation and children's creativity, some attractive methods were introduced into the classical contents of the usual program of material (Serbocroatian) language and literature and other subjects in the curriculum planned for the third grade. Work on a tale was carried out in an atmosphere of slightly transformed space in the classical classroom, mainly through group work of children, in the form of game-like activities. Children made scenery, costumes, and puppets by themselves during the period of preparation in the arts and music class, in the work of class community, or during practice. The tale was presented through movement, imagining the phenomena, all in order to make the children feel the atmosphere of the story. After that, the children acted out the tale in the classroom, and at the end they made up and wrote their own tales, presenting them during the periods of class community. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED317494

Jasmina Šefer & Nada Angelovski

"Josip Broz Tito"
Elementary School
Beograd, Yugoslavia

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

DRAMA IMPROVISATION AS A METHOD OF COVERING FAIRY TALES IN SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Tha native language school curriculum for third grade elementary school, pertaining to new readings, includes covering two fairy-tales: "The Hovering Porch", a national fairy-tale, and Anderssen's "Snow Queen". According to the curriculum each fairy-tale was planned to be covered through three periods.

INTRODUCTION

The major objective in working on fairy tales was to promote and further develop: creative thinking and behavior, critical and logical thinking and behavior, with esthetical and moral judgement, the ability to experience and express emotions.

Covering fairy-tales through drama improvisation, in addition to the aforementioned goals, was aimed to induce: individuality, independence, as well as those personality traits which facilitate cooperation in team work, inner motivation for current activities and constructive attitudes toward work.

It was our belief that fairy-tales are a suitable artistic form in accomplishing the stated goals and that drama improvisation is the best method in the sense that it activates the students.

SP031899

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Šefer
N. Angelovski

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Fairy-tales are tales of the unreal, tales of characters from faraway places and times long passed. It is these features that animate children's imagination-anything is possible. Not only do fairy-tales affect imaginative pictures in their minds, adventures and characters, they also encourage children to invent a new plot of their own, using drama improvisation. through improvised dialogues, the children can experience (not only tell) adventures, and bring into life scenes and characters by playing them, thus giving the story its form, on the spot. Due to the fact that fairy-tales do not normally contain many dialogues, the children can, on the basis of the given text, create their own dialogues, while not being influenced by those given to them. The drama that develops at certain points of the fairy-tale, the lyrical descriptions and emotions, help form a basis for expressing personal wishes, children's burdens and the difficulties they face, which is of utmost importance for: emotional outlets, getting to know one's own emotions and inner world, developing the ability to comprehend one's feelings, expressing them to others who may share them and react to what is happening to the individual.

In order to really experience what is going on, drama improvisation requires an authentic environment. This is why verbal expression needs to be supplemented with artistic expression, (the set, masks, costumes, puppets, etc.), musical expression, (suitable musical background, environmental noises, etc.), gestures, mimicry and kinetical (moving parts of the body, facial expressions, and spacial movements) expression. Emphasising the importance of activating the various senses, (vision, hearing), and moving in space, as well as the opportunity to communicate with others during the play, was aimed to initiate and maintain a state of attentiveness and interest, and overall activation to develop the feeling of love and inner motivation for current activities, as well as the emotions which may thus be provoked, (creativity, sensitivity, etc.).

Directing the story through logical sequences and the evaluation of one's own success in seeking esthetical solutions, activates logical and critical thinking and develops an attitude in relation to beauty. Everything that happens in a fairy-tale resolves in a righteous outcome, therefore, discovering new ways to maintain justice through created dialogues, will help to widen the scope of possible just solutions and moral evaluations which lead to them.

Group work in creating a story through drama improvisation has special pedagogical effects because it encourages sociability, (cooperation traits, tolerance and appreciation of others, the ability to continue that which others began, in other words, understanding others, the feeling of togetherness and belonging to the group, while working on a joint assignment, etc. - the feeling of belonging to the group tends to decrease children's egocentricity), individuality, (expressing personal inclinations and abilities, independent decision-making, as to what and how to contribute to the group, the feeling of personal and active contribution to the group, etc.), and develops a constructive attitude towards work, (individual and group responsibility in relation to the assignment, individual initiative within the group and the group as a whole, individual and group effort, the ability to assess one's own accomplishments, etc.).

ORGANIZING PREPARATION FOR WORK

PREPARING THE TEACHER AND PSYCHOLOGIST

The school psychologist prepared all the classes-class articulation, emphasising and explaining the goals, ways, methods and means to be used during class. The psychologist also participated in class work and worked on final corrections in the teacher's preparations with an aim to adapt the requirements

to the capability of the given age group and to reach an optimum class organization. The final corrections of the preparations were done after the class had been held and were thus based on experiences acquired in class.

Before holding the class, the teacher corrected preparations made by the psychologist, (mainly with respect to the time sequences planned for each activity in class), and then held the class together with the psychologist.

PREPARING THE STUDENTS

In preparing the Serbo-Croatian classes where the fairy-tale was to be covered, we also used class community meetings, socially beneficial activities classes", art classes and only sometimes part of the period in music classes and physical education. The contents, as well as the work methods in these classes were associated with the contents of Serbo-Croatian classes.

Making puppets and costumes, working on the set, and stage properties for the fairy-tale drama improvisation was completed during the following classes: 1) class community meetings, (2 periods), 2) socially beneficial activities class, (1 period), 3) art class (3 periods).

Since making the set, puppets and costumes and stage properties is planned to be covered, according to our school curriculum for third grade level, during class community meetings, (this was planned earlier by the psychologist), preparations for Serbo-Croatian classes were in accordance with the goals and work contents. The constructive game of making things during class community meetings was eimed to attract children's attention and to help bring them together through play activities.

Making the set, puppets, costumes and working on stage properties is, in this case, a function of the learning process and is usually part of the curriculum for lower grade levels, within socially beneficial activities, and therefore, these classes are quite suitable for working on and preparing the set equipment.

The art class program already coincided partly with the native language program, (for example, the children were given an assignment to do an illustration of the national fairy-tale "The Hovering Porch", in Goauche, so that this technique was suitable for decorating the set, instead using the traditional painting techniques on paper.

When necessary, the pupils continued their preparations at home. All class memebers were included in the preparations both through individual and group work.

WORK OBJECTIVES

We had selected the December and January part of the native language program to work with, because we found it suitable for encouraging in the students, the following:

1. *Creativity,* indicated by: originality in free written compositions, art expression and verbal improvisation during the fairy-tale adaptation, (through the number of new, interesting and unusual details, ideas and plans);
2. *Critical-logical thinking*, indicated by: the ability to incorporate new parts of the text into the familiar background (entity), the student's evaluation of his own, and the accomplishments of others, in respect to the esthetical and moral criteria;
3. *Developing attitudes toward esthetical and moral values,* indicated by: the student's assessment of the quality of the performed assignment, and understanding the moral of the story.

4. *Independence, individuality* and *cooperation,* indicated by: pupil's initiative in actions and decisions, accomplishing mutual goals through team work in realizing a joint result, independently resolving possible conflicts within the group, successful self-organization, the pleasure in companionship, etc.

5. The *ability* to *experience emotions* and *express* them, indicated by successfuly verbal and nonverbal communication with oneself and others as well.

These general goals, which enter the sphere of cognitive (intelectual, logical), emotional and social development, promote a motivational process, or rather, the existing motivation, and further develop it. We wanted to initiate: an activation of the senses, curiosity, motivation for research, a sense of competition with respect to the physical, (that which is produced), and the social environment, (success in the eyes of others), a motive for companionship, an achievement motive, (since everything is directed towards the realization of a joint act). Through work organization, we had a diverse school situation where the activities were suitable for the students age level, relying primarily on child play which is at this age a major preocupation. By doing so, we managed to give the child an active role, thus giving cause to inner motivation and enhancing the need and the possibility of self-actualization.

Indicators of aroused motivation were expressed through the following behavior:

- the children asked to continue to work in this manner in class
- the children are earnest and tireless in their activity (they continue to work even after the bell rings)
- they do not forget their homework because they accept their

assignments with responsibility and interest, (they remember to bring to school any materials or things they made at home)

- children from another class who had a chance to see this drama improvisation earlier, asked of their teacher to engage in the same activities themselves.

The last and probably most relevant indicator of our achievement in initiating creativity, was the children's success in creating original stories on the subject of their own choice. Contents analysis based on the number of unusual, unique, and interesting ideas and combinations of ideas in the stories, helped to establish whether the students who had experienced drama improvisation, showed superior results in comparison to those students who did not have this experience.

Even if the creative accomplishments do not significantly differ the students' interest itself, emphasizes the importance of the chosen work methods in the classroom, which can enhance work motivation by associating the school curriculum with a feeling of personal pleasure.

ORGANIZING WORK WITH AN AIM TO MOTIVATE CHILDREN AND STIMULATE CREATIVITY

PREPARATIONS

The objective of the preparations was to create an atmosphere around the fairy-tale, to initiate an emotional experience and develop a positive attitude towards the new and unknown, towards individual expression and imagination. The motives which are thus stimulated are: curiosity and research.

The following activities were performed during preparations: making puppets, costumes and decorations. As we mentioned ear-

lier, these activities were performed during art classes, class community meetings and classes of socially beneficial activities. They were also performed during after-school hours. Motives stimulated through these activities: work motive and the achievement motive.

Work was organized in small groups, where only sometimes, adults also participated, (parents, grandparents), in the events of children's play world. Adults took part in the activities only when the child requested their help, but most of the time, they were simply present and at the children's disposal. The motives stimulated through these activities: companionship motive, aroused through cooperation within the group, the motive for joint achievement and personal contribution in the joint result, through group work also.

Making parts of the set is varied depending on the goal. The degree of guidance depends on whether we aim to focus on convergent* or divergent** intelectual abilities in the students. However, this does not pertain only to the preparation classes, but also to those classes during which the fairy-tale is analyzed. Before the actual making of the characters and decorations begins, the degree of instruction guidance is defined. If we begin by introducing the story to the children, before they begin work on the characters and the set, we are then focusing on the convergent version. However, if we only outline the characters, without telling the story, this then is more of a divergent version of the preparation phase. The emotional aspect during preparation and analysis classes is accentuated through a suitable, carefully selected musical background, aimed at underlining the atmosphere of the story.

---

* *convergent thinking - directed toward one outcome*
** *divergent thinking - directed toward various outcomes (more then one)*

STORY ANALYSIS

Depending on the purpose of the current process, work was organized in small groups, the children were seated aroung desks, (usually two connected desks), or the whole class worked together, standing or sitting in a circle or semicircle. The regular "classroom" seating arrangement was used only when general conclusions were being drawn up, on the basis of statements of group speakers, containing group opinion on the activity which preceded. In other words, the regular seating arrangement where all the students are turned toward the front of the classroom, and where they have the least opportunity to take an active role in current events, was used only to conjoin the opinions of the various groups in front of the whole class, with the teacher interfering, when necessary.

Whenever the emotional reaction was significant, (that was practically happening all the time), music was introduced, or, the story was heard over again from a record player, sometimes with slides accompanying the record. However, we did not often use slides, letting the children form images in their own minds, using imagination which would otherwise be blocked, once ready pictures or scenes were offered them. Following this, the children would write or paint what they had just pictured in their minds, and thus materialize their psychological ideas, which would then become part of the decorations for the set. We especially insisted that the children turn to independent and personal expression of their inner world of ideas, because few school disciplines deal with these ideas. Normally, school curriculum is more oriented toward cognition of the outer world.

Because of exceptional (emotional) significance of the "Snow Queen" in a child's experience, after listening to the story during anylysis classes, we insisted thet the children engage in empathy games. Through movements and sound simulation with

a musical background, the children would try to identify themselves with the sound of the wind in the trees and the movements of the branches, with the feelings and magical movements and words which defrosted Kai, with the bird's chirping, the flower's growing, all of which the children imitated by different movements and voices. The concepts of nature and love of mankind are apstract, but playing them makes them palpable (concrete), not only as experience, but conceptual knowledge also. During the puppet show, the children learned the dialogue, but through the play, they learned to move freely in space which enabled them to really experience the story and to express themselves through making up new parts of the story.

Empathy games may be played in music class or physical education class, where they help develop a feeling for music and psysical movement.

REINFORCEMENT

These classes were primarily used to accomplish a full emotional and creative experience of the story through drama improvisation.

Later on, through improvisation of a new familiar tale, we moved further and further away from the initial plot, up to the point when a completely new story was created. This work was continued in class community meetings. Basically two options were given in the drama improvisation, the first of which was a puppet show, (The Hovering Porch) and the other being a stage play, (The Snow Queen), in which the same set, costumes and decorations were used. Wherever there were many drama elements, especially natural phenomena, we chose play acting, thus enabling all these elements to be present in the acting, (including spacial movement) which influence the depth of the impression.

Other reinforcement periods, if more than one were needed, were used for independent, individual work in class or at home. Every student was free to choose the assignment in which he or she showed special interest, according to his own abilities and ambitions, thus deciding how difficult an assignment he was ready to undertake. The easiest assignment was retelling the story, in other works, remembering it. The more difficult assignments referred to making up parts of the story or all of it. We would take out a part of the familiar tale. It was easier to bill in the missing part at the beginning or the end of the story, while filling in the missing part in the middle was a more difficult job. Besides originality, in making up parts of the story, this kind of work also stimulated logical and critical thinking, especially when filling in the middle part of the plot because this required logical associating of separate parts into a whole. In order to encourage those students who are not prone to express themselves verbally, besides writing, the children could fill in the missing part by drawing it. It was compulsory, even for those students who showed lowest abilities, to change something in the story, and think of something new. Finally, the children were given the assignment to make up a completely new tale, which was especially interesting to those students who wanted complete feedom (from the curriculum). This turned out to be the favorite assignment. The children preferred to make up a completely new story, rather than to incorporate new parts into a given whole.

Covering topics for which the curriculum plans not more than one period, can be organized in such a way, that the students, either individually or in groups at home, work on the preparation phase, including getting acquainted with the plot. Then during class, the story can be acted out through drama improvisation with a musical background. Making up new stories, either in writing or drawing can be homework.

Drama games are aimed at experiencing the story, motivating and stimulating imagination and cooperative group relations. They may also be used as part of a program prepared for students from other classes and parents, or at the spring youth gatherings when "public classes" are held. However, we must keep in mind that drama improvisation was primarily meant for promoting creativity, socialisation of children, etc. This is why drama improvisation ought not to become a means of giving school performances because the competition that normally arises in such situations and the need for publicity would overcome the more significant objectives discussed in this paper.

A detailed outline of the preparations for each teaching unit, is given as a supplement to this paper. It will show the exact procedure we followed together with the students.

TEACHING UNIT TOPIC: "THE HOVERING PORCH"

I PREPARING CHARACTERS AND SET

To be covered during the following classes:

- socially beneficial activities (one period)
- class community meetings (one period)
- art class (one period-later on during story interpretation)

A youth leader or one of the parent volunteers may participate as technical aid. However, they should not take part by offering ideas.

Preparations:

The children should bring from home:

- large cardboard boxes from the supermarket (at least 1 by 1 m) for construction of the porch and castle,
- colored packing paper for the stage curtain,

- regular packing paper,
- cardboard or sheets of thin cardboard,
- colored creppe paper, (white, yellow, and by all means green),
- lots of cotton,
- pieces of cloth and waterproof fabric, in bright colors,
- various colors of wool,
- corks,
- small cardboard boxes,
- large sponges which can be cut into smaller pieces, etc.

Other equipment children need to bring from home:

- large tubes of tempera colors and paint in cans,
- large bowls and brushes for painting the porch and castle,
- small brushes for painting the puppets,
- scissors, thread, needles,
- glue, scotch tape, etc.

Two desks should be joined to form a table for four.

The Objective of the Period

Promoting the use of imagination in forming ideas and realizing them, leaving a free choice in the method of realization of the idea.

Topic Unit

Making the characters for the fairy-tale in the form of puppets (dragon, princess, 3 princes, a czar, 3 girls from the "Porch", 3 horses) and the set, (porch and castle).

Articulation of the Period

The children do not know that they are preparing a drama improvisation of a fairy-tale and that what they are making are to be stage properties. That remains to be a surprise.

Since art classes during this period of the school year cover gouache technique, everything the children do with colors is done with very thick temperas, on various objects. The children are given a specific art assignment - to make puppets, a castle and porch. The names of the characters are written on the blackboard and the structure. The students are free to select what they are going to do within the existing options. Following this, the children are instructed that it is important to use a lot of imagination in what they are about to do. In other words - "think of a way to make these characters come alive, in an original way, not copying others. Each character and structure is then done by a group of four students. There is a total of 8 groups in the class. If any students happen to be surplus when the groups are formed, they can, within the existing groups or individually work on details of the field - flowers, trees, grass, birds, etc. If the children do not complete their assignment during two school periods, they continue their work in groups, at home. For their next class, the children are supposed to bring the completed puppets, the castle and porch, and the rest of the stage properties they finished in the meantime at home. Besides that, the children should bring either their own fairy-tale book, or check one out of the library, and ask their grandmothers to tell them a fairy-tale, see the fairy-tale in the theatre or the movies, or on TV.

II STORY ANALYSIS

(double Serbo-Croatian and art classes)

Objectives of the Period

Encouraging 1) independence and self-informing, 2) imagination, 3) logical thinking, 4) moral judgement and the feeling of justice and 5) esthetical feelings through

1. individual work during the preparation phase

2. pointing out the best parts of the story and illustrating them.

3. establishing a sequence of pictures of the story and

4., 5. through discussion about the ending of the story and the best parts of it.

Forms of Work

Individual and group work during the preparation phase, work in small groups, combined, now and then, with the traditional seating arrangement in the classroom, during story analysis.

Teaching Methods

Getting acquainted with the plot, by way of working on the text, through dialogues, and painting during art class with follows.

Teaching Means

The fairy-tale books the children brought to class, records and tapes with music and equipment for art class for illustrations. (Note that art class follows directly after Serbo-Croatian class).

Articulation of the Period

Preparation: Before the period begins, the children should have arranged the desks in a way suitable for work in small groups. Each student should put his fairy-tale book he brought, on the table. The children are prepared to work on the fairy-tale (through talks with their grandmothers, theatre shows, etc.). One of the students, a good reader, has rehearsed at home, reading the story out loud in front of the class, or the story can be heard from a record. The students are told they will be working in small groups and that

group opinion will be reported to the class by a group member, whom the teacher will select. In other words, everyone must be prepared to become a possible group spokesman.

Introduction: The spokesman of each group announces the fairy-tale titles his group members have read. The teacher selects as group spokesman those students she does not expect will show a high level of performance in their work, since this is a simple assignment, because it amounts to just informing the class (5 minutes). After this, the teacher lets the groups agree as to what a fairy-tale really is, and what makes it different from other story forms. This time however, the teacher will select as group spokesman those pupils who have shown good capability in drawing conclusions, (5 minutes).

Once a correct definition of fairy-tales is established, all the students write it down in their notebooks. The teacher then calls on a student with lower achievement to underline the difference between poetry and prose in order to review the basic classification of literature into different classes. (5 minutes).

Elaboration: Now all the students open their textbooks and follow along while the student who rehearsed good reading, reads the fairy-tale out loud, (5 minutes). After this, the students have another 5 minutes to read the story to themselves. While the children are reading, some music is played, very softly, in order to stimulate imagination without interfering with their reading. When this procedure is completed, each group should be given one of the following assignments:

1. Point out those parts of the story which are unreal.
2. Point out the best parts of the story and explain why.

3. Identify the main characters (good and bad) and use examples from the story to illustrate this.

4. Find evidence in the fairy-tale to show that justice triumphed. Then try to remember how other fairy-tales you've read ended. Does justice always triumph? The group spokesman are chosen by the teacher as she calls their names. Again, the teacher will select those students in each group who are capable of best interpreting the assignments of their respective groups, those most imaginative and prone to fantasies, when the assignment is "esthetical", and the "logical-thinking" students, when analizing the characters and the motto of the story. The last groups to be announcing their group opinion, should be the one which discovered the most beautiful and unreal parts of the story, so that the rest of the class may write down in their notebooks the most beautiful scenes and figures of speech.

Conclusion: The conclusion of this period is, at the same time, an introduction to the next period - art class. The children are seated in the usual classroom seating arrangement, facing the teacher at the front of the classroom. Together with the teacher, it is their task, to divide the story up into 8 scenes, (as in a play). The children are working in the same groups as in the previous class. It is important though, that each group now chooses one of the scenes to illustrate, on very large size paper, in goauche, using very lively colors*. The point is, that every group

---

* *The children independently distribute work within the group. For example: either each student does a part of the scene, or some of them draw while others color and still others work on the outline of the forms. In the beginning, the whole group decides on the concept of the illustration, while one of them who draws best sketches the picture. During their work, one of them may: incorporate parts, suggested by others, into the whole of the illustration.*

selects a different scene to illustrate because there are eight major scenes in the story, and the same number of groups within the class. These illustrations are to become the scenography for the story dramatisation, during the next Serbo-Croatian class. While the children are making the illustrations, about half way through the period, some slides may be shown, although this is not necessary. Once completed, all the illustrations should be lined up in a sequence, to form a strip, held together by a card-board background. Later on, this is to serve as a stage-curtain and set for the puppet show.

Impressions from the Classes

During elaboration, after having heard the fairy-tale, in order to keep their attention, the students, as they read the story to themselves, should underline parts of the story they especially like, because once they begin reading something they are already familiar with, it is necessary that they are given an additional assignment to maintain their attention. Aften having worked in groups on specific assignments, the whole class can have a discussion on the selected, underlined parts of the story, whether they were chosen as the best parts or as examples of justice.

III REINFORCEMENT

Objectives of the Period

Stimulating: 1) imagination, 2) esthetical feelings, 3) the ability to express oneself, 4) moral feelings and moral judgement, through

- preparation of the play and possible improvisations during the dramatization process (1)
- preparing the play and performing it (2)

- acting out of the story (3)
- dramatizing the outcome of the story with possible comments from the children (4).

Forms of Work

A group of students act on the story in front of the class, in order that all the children in the class take an active role in the dramatization process. In other works, each group takes its turn.

Teaching Methods

Group demonstration of the text, through improvised dramatization by way of monologue and dialogue.

Teaching Instruments (Equipment)

A cardboard porch, castle, puppets representing the characters from the story, story illustrations for the stage set, and records and tapes with music.

Articulation of the Period

Preparation: Providing the stage-curtain, the set, and puppets as well as music which serves as a background during the play. One of the groups is prepared for dramatization in advance.

Introduction: The group which was prepared, acts out the story in front of the class, with a musical background.

Elaboration: Following directly after the acting out, another group is formed on the spot, which performs the story once again, in a different manner, with lots of improvisations, which are encouraged. All the groups give their own performance with their specific interpretation of the story. In the

end, if there is enough room, the whole class performs the story. One group acts out the play as earlier, while the others act as parts of the scenography. Trees, flowers, birds and animals, (even those which may not exist in the story itself, but are possible) are played by the students. Plants, animals and objects may thus be capable of speech, they can comment on the plot, they can sigh, or in any other manner express what they feel in connection with the action played by the central group of actors. It is important that the children feel free to react spontaneously, to express themselves through improvisation, as a kind of free game which is merely generated by the story of the porch. If completely new parts of the plot appear, all the children should be encouraged to do so themselves. In the end, the story should have a completely new form, plot and ending. In other words, once a new story begins to develop, through free association, leaving the basic story framework, it must not be stopped, the other children will accept this and continue to construct it further. Once the children have acquired the ability to improvise, they can perform for other classes, without preparation, if possible.

Conclusion

The students can make a note of their impressions of this in the class yearbook, (a yearbook is planned in the work of class communities). For example: each student can express his own impressions in one sentence. This can be done during the next meeting of the class community, which should be held directly after this period. The stage properties should be stored somewhere for future occasions, (New Year's celebration, etc.) as the scenography of the class theatre, which may even acquire a name given by the students themselves.

IV APPLYING THE FAIRY-TALE EXPERIENCE

Work Objectives

Stimulating: 1) logical thinking, 2) imagination, through

- eduction of correlates - introducing new parts of the plot in a blank space in the comic strip, the children made, in such a way that it fits into the rest of the scenes (1)
- making of the new parts, or the whole story (2)

Forms of Work

Traditional clasroom seating arrangement during the introductory work (all students are seated facing the front of the classroom), independent, individual work during elaboration, and once again traditional classroom seating arrangement during conclusion.

Teaching Methods

Monologue, during introduction, working on the text during elaboration, and dialogue during conclusion.

Teaching Instruments (Equipment)

Illustrations of the story that the children made, as a stage curtain, writing equipment.

Articulation of the Period

Preparation: The preparations have been completed during the previous classes. The teacher has put up on the blackboard the illustrations in a sequence which is in accord with the original plot.

Introduction: The teacher adresses the children (who are seated facing the front of the classroom), referring to the

comic strip story on the board, and says: "These pictures represent parts of a story where something important is happening. These pictures, as you know, are lined up in the same order as the events in the story. Now I am going to take on picture out, (takes one picture out), and you will try to think of a new part in its place. However, you may not choose one of the parts already shown here, but think of a completely new part that fits in with the rest of the parts." The instructions should be further clearified, even individually, if necessary.

An illustration of the assignment:

Elaboration: Each child tries to complete this assignment independently, in his notebook. The children should try to retell the story in their own words, following the illustrations. Once they reach the missing part, they should fill it in with the new text and then circle it with a colored pencil. After that, they should continue to retell the story on the basis of the illustrations. If any of the children have difficulties in completing this assignment, they may just retell the story, or change the ending or beginning of the story. If any of the children cannot be motivated to express themselves in writing, or if any of them happen to be fidgety, then let them just do a drawing of the

missing part and color it, but make sure the child understands that it has to be original and fit in with the rest of the story. The assignment is really the same as the one we mentioned in the beginning, except that it is not performed in writing. If a student wishes to change some other part of the story, rather than the one we took out, this should be allowed, by all means. The easiest version of the asignment is obviously simply retelling the story in one's own words, and this should be assigned to those students only, who have little or no chance in succeeding in doing the more sophisticated assignments.

Conclusion: As a homework assignment, the children are told to think of an imaginary and new story, in the category of fairy-tales. Those students who feel that they need to rely on a familiar plot, may retell a fairy-tale they saw, or even retell a science-fiction story.

TEACHING UNIT TOPIC: "THE SNOW QUEEN"

I PREPARING COSTUMES AND SCENOGRAPHY

1. Preparations at Home

Work Objectives

Getting acquainted with the events, scenes and characters of the fairy-tale, which is to be be covered later and for the performance of which the costumes are being made. The selection of fabrics for the costumes also stimulates the imagination.

Work Organization

The students are given homework:

- to read the fairy-tale, paying special attention to the sequence of events

- to individually, in writing, make a note in their homework notebooks, of those parts of the story, which they think are most beautiful and imaginative
- to sort out the characters in the story and describe them in their homework notebooks, (it is important that they form a mental image of the characters and how they look so that they can make the costumes later)
- to discuss with their parents as to how the costumes can be made for specific characters in the given story
- to invite the parents to help with the costume making
- to bring the necessary material from home, for the costumes

Material:

- a large piece of white tulle
- loads of cotton
- pieces of clothing which can be used for Kai's and Gerda's costumes, the Snow Queen's and devil's costumes (white winter clothing, a formal white dress for the Queen, white hats and shalls for the children, white and black T-shirts)
- creppe paper in different colors for parts of the costumes
- shiny artificial jewelry for the Snow Queen
- large piece of packing paper
- a large shite bed sheet for parts of the costumes and possibly for a stage background
- a snow sledge and other winter play things

Equipment:

- tempera colors, (lots of blue, white and black for painting the background on the white sheet)
- scissors, thread and needles
- glue, scotch tape, etc.

2. Preparations in School

"Double" periods of art class, which can if necessary, be followed by the class community meeting and socially beneficial activities classes.

Work Objectives

While creating and combining the costumes, the children are encouraged to use their imagination in art expression.

Articulation of the Period

While preparing the classroom for group work, the students join desks together to form tables. Small groups are formed once more, but not the same as in working on the previous fairy-tale. Once the groups are formed, they gather around their tables, placing all the material they brought from home for the costumes, on top. Each group then decides which character they will be making a costume for, taking care that each group is working on a different costume. Group members participate in creating the costume, through their ideas and various solutions. Mothers who had consented to give technical assistance, may now help, (for example: sewing something together, cutting something out, etc.). The following characters in the story need costumes: The Snow Queen, Kai, Gerda, grandmother, the devil and children in the square. The castle and porch which the children made for the previous fairy-tale, can now be used once again, by adding a lot of cotton, white tulle and shiny trinkets, thus transforming it into the castle of ice, of the Snow Queen. This again, can be taken off, and the same stage set be used in quite another fairy-tale performance. One of the groups can work on the white-sheet-background. The illustration in the background should support and follow the overall atmosphere of the fairy-tale. Since the stage set consists mostly of snow covered or objects covered with ice, shades of blue

should prevail in the background also, with a star here and there, so as to reflect the atmosphere of sparkling ice, the snow and light of faraway polar regions. If the children do not finish the costumes in school, they continue their work, organized in the same groups, at home. The children may also add masks to the costumes. If there are more groups than characters in the story, then more then one group can work on the same character. If so, then the different costumes for the same characters can be used in alternation, or the better costume may be chosen (later, at home, the children can make new costumes and masks for the characters in the story they made up, and which they can use during class community meetings, when they will have a chance to read these stories to one another and perform them. However, all these costumes can be used for the New Year's celebration party, if a mascarade is organized. For this occasion, the students can individually select a character which they would like to represent. They can look for an illustration of the character and improvise imitating the costume or even do an improved version. Naturally, if the character is made up, so is the costume.

II STORY ANALYSIS

Work Objectives

Stimulating emotional reactions to the fictious parts of the story, the moral aspect of the plot (moral judgement) and imagination by creating figures (shapes) in space, and making up stories.

Work Methods

Working on the text during the preparation phase, showing illustrations and monologues during introduction, non-verbal methods of autosuggestive empathy for the story's events during elaboration, the so called empathy game.

Forms of Work

Group and individual work during preparations, work organized with the traditional classroom seating arrangement during introduction, work organized with the whole class as a group, in pairs and individual work during autosuggestive empathy during elaboration.

Teaching Means (Instruments)

Adapted stage properties, (snow castle), the stage background, slides, records and tapes, as sound presentations of the story, and a musical background.

Articulation of the Period

Preparations: Preparations should have been completed during art classes, class community meetings, socially beneficial activities and at home. A few minutes before class begins, the children arrange the desks to form a circle for an active audience, who's members may, at any time during the performance, join in the event in the center of the circle, if he or she happens to have an idea. Alternative: if there are a lot of students in the class, and the teacher happens to have a parent assistant or youth leader, then two circles can be formed, or a semicircle audience arrangement.

Introduction:

The children are seated and are listening to the fairy-tale, with a musical background, slides, if they can start the imagination, (dramatic slides, in good colors). If the slides are not attractive and impressive, it is better not to show them to the children. In this case, it is better to instruct the children to listen to the story with their eyes closed so as to visualize the events and characters in their own minds (15 minutes).

Elaboration: The teacher gives instructions for the empathy games, (that's what we called them), shich always need to have a musical background.

a) "We are going to play some music for you now, you are supposed to close your eyes and try to visualize the events and form pictures in a sequence, just as if you were telling the story to someone else. Try as best you can to form an image of how the characters look and behave." Since the children are not used to this method of work, the teacher needs to stop a while, so that everyone has their eyes closed, and to repeat the instructions every now and then, while they are visualizing the story. (At the very beginning, the teacher can train them to visualize only part of the story). Then the teacher says: "When you are finished, keep your eyes closed, just fold your hands so that we know you're done." This is necessary so that those students who need less time to complete this assignment do not interfere with the others who may take a little longer. (5 do 10 minutes).

b) The teacher says to the children: "Stand up, and while listening to the music, think of one of the characters from the story, and then take on the same position as this character is in your mind." When the children have done this, the teacher goes from one to another, asking who he or she is, and what he is doing, or what he is feeling. This way, the children give an interpretation of their posture or movement. As they give an answer to the teacher, they open their eyes and watch the others and listen to their interpretations. In the end, they all have their eyes open (5 to 10 minutes).

c) Then the teacher says: "Close your eyes and bend as the branches of a tree do against the wind, or be the wind

itself, and whistle and move as the wind does." (A couple of minutes).

d) The teacher now says: "Open your eyes. Now we shall all try to be nature. Imagine you are the frost, the cold, the whistling of the wind, the snow creaking, the echo of voices in an ice castle, or a frosted field, the bending of the branches, the flowers' crying, etc. Anyone may think of something else. With motions and respective sounds, try to conjure any of these plants or natural phenomena. I will come up to each one of you and ask what you are, so please answer me." (5 do 10 minutes).

e) Then the teacher says: "I want each one of you to find his pair. Each pair consists of a boy and a girl. In other words, I want each boy to find a girl, or the other way aroung. Has everyone found his pair? (Waits until everyone has found a pair). Now face one another, close your eyes, put your arms on each other's shoulders (embrace). Now I want every boy to imagine he is Kai, and every girl she is Gerda. Has everyone done that? And now, now ... Let Gerda think of the most tender words which could melt his frozen heart. Gerdas, think of the most tender works and whisper them in his ear. (the teacher waits). If your Kai feels that the words are not tender enough, let him stay frozen and not move. Up until the moment when Gerda finds the most beautiful words, Kai should not melt." Once the children have done this, they should open their eyes. The teacher will go from one student to another, asking what Gerda said to Kai, and he will say wheter the words were warm and tender enough. If any of the girls do not want to tell the teacher what they said to Kai, the teacher should not persist. The whole game is repeated once more, except that this time, it is Kai who must try and melt Gerda's frozen heart and

do so by finding the right appropriate words. This part of the game is especially significant, because boys in our cultural environment, do not have such a developed vocabulary in expressing tenderness. (10 to 15 minutes).

f) Now the teacher says: "I want the girls to form a figure of their boy-pair, doing something. The girls will "shape" the boys' body, and which ever way she fixes his arm or leg, it should stay that way, as if frozen. The boys should have their eyes closed, while the girls, on the basis of their own idea, form a figure out of the boys, representing someone. You need to think of interesting people, events, animals, plants, natural forces, supernatural beings, which could be represented by these figures." When the girls have finished, the teacher goes from one to another, asking what the figure represents. The game is then repeated, except that the girls are figures this tima, and the boys are the sculptors. (about 15 minutes).

NOTE: If there is not enough time for these games, organize "double" classes, for example, use Serbo-Croatian classes and continue into the class community meeting period.

Conclusion: With music playing, the stage is prepared for the performance of the fairy-tale during the next period and homework is given. Everyone has to make up a story at home, in which, things will have feelings. The children can look for another fairy-tale of the people of the Northern regions, where the events take place in an environment of winter nights, snow and ice, with fictious characters.

Impressions from the Period

The boys are shy and unwilling to expose their tender words for Gerda, but they want to do it, so they write little notes and bring them to the teacher, on their own initiative. These are some of the things they said to Gerda: Beautiful, sweet Gerda, my heart is enveloped in sorrow, please defrost; Dear Gerda, the most beautiful in the world, please defrost; Oh Gerda, my goldilocks, let the spring sunshine defrost you as its light falls upon you; Dear Gerda, my friend, let all the warmth of nature defrost you; Dear Gerda, please defrost, for my heart cannot live without you; Dear Gerda, I will take you to the sun and you will defrost; Dear Gerda, my magic words will defrost you (he says Abra Cadabra). And here's what the Gerdas said before that: Sweet little Kai, my warm love and desire for you will defrose your frozen heart; Dear Kai, the sun and heavenly bodies wont help you, but my love and warm tears will; Dear, good Kai, my best friend, please defrost, for I want my love to warm you like the sun; Beloved Kai, I love you, let my love and warm heart defrost you; Dear Kai, take these roses from my heart and defrost; My dear Kai, love thee I, defrost, for without you, I will die. These of course were the most beautiful moments in our work, and we felt that the whole class, as homogeneous group, was beginning to join together very closely, as if sharing a big secret. Once the children had overcome their initial shyness, they enjoyed expressing their feelings and communicating tender words. It simply did not seem to them as superflous and ackward-ridicilous, as if discovering a completely new world, unknown to them previously. To us, it was quite fascinating to watch this happen.

III REINFORCEMENT

Work Objectives

Inducing emotional experience of nature and people, the con-

cept of good, (moral judgement), and imagination through drama improvisation and making up new parts in the story, independence through free creation of new texts.

Teaching Methods

Dialogues, through drama improvisation.

Forms of Work

Working in small groups on fairy-tale dramatization, with a musical background, in front of the whole class. All the students should participate by way of each group taking its turn.

Teaching Means (Instruments)

Snow castle, a backgroung representing a snow-covered night, costumes for the characters in the story, as well as costumes brought from home for characters in the newly created stories.

Articulation of the Period

Preparation: In previous classes, the students have prepared the set and costumes, read the story, made a note of the best parts in the story, analized the story by listening to records and playing "empathy games", and made up a story of their own, at home. A few minutes before class, they prepare the room, and form a semicircle of chairs for the audience to be seated.

Elaboration: The period is not divided into the introduction, elaboration and conclusion phases. The whole period is organized in fairy-tale improvisation, within small groups. This time, however, it will not be done with puppets, but rather the costumed children playing the roles of the various characters of the story. The first two groups are per-

forming the "Snow Queen", twice. The groups which follow, do not perform, but improvise on the subject of the fairy-tale, while the last two groups perform a newly created story, earlier assigned as homework. These two groups are free to completely and independently change the plot of the new story, while performing it. The drama improvisation performance always has a musical background. It would be even better if one of the parents could accompany the drama improvisation by playing different musical pieces in order to emphasise the atmosphere of the fiven moment. It would also be nice if one of the parents could film, or even just take pictures of some of the events in the drama workshop (club), to remember them, while the children write down their impressions for the class yearbook.

NOTE: All the stage properties are kept to be used for the New Year's celebration party, and future drama improvisations, which may, now and then, continue to happen during the class community meetings periods, based on stories written by one of the students. Everyone should try to keep the drama workshop in the class alive.

Impressions

The children were highly motivated for this form of work, and they often stayed after school to continue playing.